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several days, about the middle of October, around a house in the lower part of Miller Canyon. It was the only one of the species seen.

***Certhia familiaris albescens*.** Sierra Madre Creeper. Fairly common throughout the Huachucas during October, but in daily lessening numbers. The species does not remain in the mountains through the winter.

***Sitta carolinensis nelsoni*.** Rocky Mountain Nuthatch. A few were seen in the Rincon Mountains. In the Huachucas they were abundant, mostly in the lower parts of the range.

***Sitta pygmæa*.** Pigmy Nuthatch. The Pigmy Nuthatch appears to be a bird of the pine woods altogether. In the Huachucas it was not seen below 8000 feet at any time, and at the end of October was the only species of bird common at that altitude. It was not met with in the parts of the Rincon Mountains we visited.

***Bæolophus wollweberi annexus*.** Bridled Titmouse. As usual this bird was found in the greatest abundance in the oak belt of the Huachucas, while in the Rincons it was one of the few species that was fairly common. Moulting specimens were taken September 26, and in October young and old were indistinguishable in plumage.

***Psaltiriparus plumbeus*.** Lead-colored Bush-tit. This species proved to be unexpectedly rare in the Huachucas. I was in the mountains two weeks before I met with it, and then it was only occasionally that I would run into a flock. It was not seen in the Rincons at all.

***Regulus calendula*.** Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Very common in the Huachucas. Early in October they were frequently met with in flocks of twenty or twenty-five, but their numbers were greatly lessened by the end of the month. I believe that a few undoubtedly remain in the mountains through the winter.

***Myadestes townsendi*.** Townsend Solitaire. A single bird was seen near the mouth of Miller Canyon on October 10.

***Hylocichla guttata guttata*.** Alaska Hermit Thrush. Two specimens referable to this race were secured on October 29 and November 6, respectively. Very few Hermit Thrushes of any sort were seen.

***Hylocichla guttata auduboni*.** Audubon Hermit Thrush. A female of this variety was secured in the Huachucas on October 11.

***Sialia mexicana bairdi*.** Chestnut-backed Bluebird. One or two small flocks were seen in the Rincon Mountains. In the Huachucas the species was not as abundant as I have found it during the summer months, and was most frequently met with in the foothill region.

***Sialia arctica*.** Mountain Bluebird. Seen on the plains below the Huachucas. The first flock was observed on October 28, and the species was afterwards met with on several occasions.

*Chicago, Illinois.*

## THE MEXICAN BLACK HAWK

By GERALD BAMBER THOMAS

**D**URING the fall and winter of 1905 and spring of 1906 it was my pleasure to observe quite extensively the habits of one of the most, if not the most interesting of our Raptores, the Mexican Black Hawk (*Urubitinga anthracina*). Nearly all my observations were confined to the little colony of British

Honduras, Central America, where the Mexican Black Hawk is by far the most abundant hawk of the region.

The favorite haunt of this species there, I found, was the long stretches of sand dunes and savannas studded here and there by clumps of palmetto and gnarled pines.

Here the ground is honey-combed by thousands of holes of various sizes, the abode of countless numbers of huge land crabs. In the evening, as soon as the sun is down, they come out from their holes by thousands, hurrying here and there and always fighting, brandishing their big claws in the air like a pigmy wielding a huge scoop-shovel.

It is then that the hawks are seen busily engaged in their pursuit for food, as these crabs form almost their sole diet in this particular locality. They always catch and kill more than they can eat at the time in order that they may not be wanting on the morrow when all the crabs have gone deep in their holes to escape the heat of the day. Occasionally I noticed a hawk flying to the nest with a large



NEST OF MEXICAN BLACK HAWK

lizard or snake, but more frequently they were satisfied with the crabs obtained the night before. In not one instance did I see them in pursuit of any birds, nor do their nests with young show any signs that birds are ever taken as prey.

In flight they excel every one of the hawks, kites, or falcons except possibly the Swallow-tailed Kite. Their flight is really marvelous, excelling in some particulars even the far-famed Frigate or Man-o-war Bird. The greater part of the year they are rather dull and sluggish but when nesting time comes they are ever on the wing until the young are able to take care of themselves.

It is very interesting to see them obtaining material for the nest. They circle high in the air sending out their queer whistling cry, when suddenly one of them folds its wings very close to its side and plunges towards the ground with the speed of an arrow. One almost holds his breath expecting to see the great bird strike the earth with such force that he will be transformed into a lifeless mass of bone and feather. But suddenly just before he reaches the dead tree, thru whose branches you expect to see him crashing, he throws open his wings to their full ex-

tent, his tail spreads and flattens against the downward rush and the great talons hang loosely down. Then gliding swiftly over the topmost branch, the swinging and apparently useless feet suddenly stiffen, a faint crack is heard and he slowly fans his way over to the nearby nest, firmly grasping in his talons a twig from the tree on which he seemingly so nearly escaped destruction.

The nest itself is a huge platform of sticks often measuring four feet across and two feet in depth, sometimes deeply and other times only slightly cupped, lined with pieces of green leaves and green pine needles. Their location I always found was in a pine tree, the distance from the ground varying from fifteen to fifty or sixty feet. More often, however, they were between twenty and thirty feet up, in small pines.

According to several good authorities the usual complement of eggs is two and three, but in only one instance out of the twenty-seven nests examined was there more than one egg, and this exceptional nest contained two. In some cases they are beautifully marked with lavender, umber and light brown, and in other cases they are totally unmarked; however the greater majority show distinct markings.

The old birds are very bold when the nest contains young and often perch on a branch five or six feet from the nest while one handles the young. Often, too, the male, circling high in the air with dangling legs, a marked peculiarity of this species, will suddenly make one of his awful plunges straight at the intruder, swerving just in time to avoid the shock which would undoubtedly kill the bird and knock the intruder out of the tree.

Like many other hawks, if the nest is robbed, they at once go to work on another nest, and I have taken three sets in one season from the same bird.

*Livermore, Iowa.*

## A MIGRATION WAVE OF VARIED THRUSHES

By JOSEPH MAILLIARD

OCTOBER 20, 1906, is a date firmly fixed in my memory by two occurrences. One was the commencement of one of the worst forest fires that we have ever been threatened with—started as usual by criminal foolishness—and the other the witnessing of the only actual *wave* of migration on the Pacific Coast that I have had the good fortune to observe. The latter, happily, came first in order on that memorable day, the second occurrence keeping me too busy for a week to think of anything beyond saving the Rancho San Geronimo, and possibly the old idea of future punishment, when the flames got the better of us at times. On the morning of this day I started out early on a quail hunt, with my son and my ranch superintendent, as had been previously arranged, partly on business and partly on pleasure bent.

A very strong, and exceedingly warm and dry north wind was blowing, amounting in places to a veritable gale. We drove from the house to the extreme end of the ranch, a distance of about four miles, before sunrise, in the face of the gale, and putting up the team in the barn there, commenced on foot to ascend the range with the purpose in view of looking over the property and, incidentally, seeking for quail in their accustomed haunts. The sun was rising as we began the ascent and the air startlingly clear. We had taken but a few steps when my atten-